

8 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Updates on school closures and remote learning

Thank you very much for your support and understanding during what has been a challenging and rapidly-changing picture throughout UK education this week. As I recognised in my letter on Monday, the changes that have happened have undoubtedly created difficulties for many of you as, once again, you find yourselves both working from home and looking after your own children. All staff in our schools are acutely aware of this, and I assure you that we will try to make the process of ‘remote learning’ as straightforward as it can be.

Remote learning

When working at home during this period of school closure, your child should be fully occupied with school work each day as follows –

Age/ phase	Daily hours of work
Primary school Key Stage 1	At least 3 hours
Primary school Key Stage 2	At least 4 hours
Secondary school	5 hours

There will be a range of different activities and learning experiences during this daily teaching and learning. This will include (but is not limited to): “live” teaching of a particular topic; question and answer sessions (some verbal, some via email/chat streams); assessment feedback; videos/narrated presentations; and, a wide range of set tasks for pupils to complete individually within a given period of time. Most importantly, **work should follow each pupil’s daily learning plan (primary) or timetable (secondary)**. During each designated lesson or period of the day, your child’s teacher will be available and focused on the learning of that particular class. It is therefore very important that, *wherever possible*, your child is logged on to the remote session of learning at that time.

If your child is not able to access their lessons because of challenges around digital devices or internet access please inform us because we are able to provide support with this. Children of critical workers/ those classed as vulnerable will access the same resources in school as all children learning at home.

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There will be further information shared by your child's school in terms of how to access the online learning.

Contacting the school

Please continue to contact your child's school with any questions or concerns you might have, either by telephone or email. The relevant member of staff will always try to respond to you as soon as possible, but please bear with us if this takes a little bit longer than you are used to for obvious reasons. Also, I would respectfully remind all parents and carers that members of school staff will not be reading or responding to emails outside of normal working hours.

Key worker provision

If you or your spouse/partner that you live with has a job designated as 'critical' by the government (see the list [here](#)) you are entitled to send your child into school *when you are undertaking that job*. For example, if that job is full time, your child is entitled to come into school every day; if you work for three days per week in the critical job, your child is entitled to come in for those days. If pupils are attending on this basis, they will be in school for the entire day, rather than just for mornings or afternoons for example.

Obviously, we are committed to having the lowest number of people possible in our schools as part of the national effort to reduce virus transmission rates. Therefore, please only send your child into school if it is absolutely necessary and if there is no other adult in the household who does not have a job designated as critical who could supervise them. If you are able to keep your child at home, you will be contributing to the national effort to reduce the transmission of the virus.

Your child's school may ask for evidence of your job such as a payslip or ID badge.

GCSE and A-Level examinations

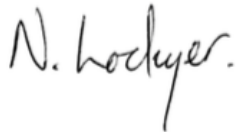
On 6th January Gavin Williamson, the Education Secretary, told Parliament that GCSE, AS Level and A Level examinations will not take place in summer 2021. The Department for Education is working on final planning around how a teacher assessed system for these qualifications can be set up. Unfortunately, we understand that the details around the system of assessment will not be available from the government until the end of February at the earliest.

Once more detailed information is shared with schools, we will be able to update students due to complete qualifications and their parents. Examination boards who provide vocational qualifications (such as BTECs) will also be updating schools. Students due to take examinations and complete courses this academic year should continue to work hard and apply themselves to the study of their full qualifications. We know many students will be worried by these recent announcements, particularly those who were due to take mock examinations or who may have missed periods of school due to self-isolation prior to Christmas. We would like to reassure students that staff will do everything they can to

reasonably support them once assessment systems are finalised by the Department for Education.

Your child's school and I will continue to update you as more information becomes available to us. The restrictions we are all living and working under at the moment are a significant challenge for everyone. I hope that by working in partnership with you, we can ensure the best possible continuing education for your child/children.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. Lockyer." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N' and a long, sweeping underline.

Neil Lockyer
Chief Executive Officer